29. Information Technology Act 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other information security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through internet.

Internet telephony

1566. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to introduce internet telephony via VSNL in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there are any private Internet Service Providers who are offering internet telephony in the open market; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) As per the policy, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are permitted to offer Internet Telephony after obtaining due permission. Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) have been permitted to offer Internet Telephony Service. As per the information furnished by VSNL, they are already providing this service to their corporate customers.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) As on 28-02-2003, private ISPs have been permitted against 97 licenses to offer Internet Telephony Service, out of which start of Internet Telephony Service has been reported in respect of 44 licences.